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FM AMEMBASSY BISHKEK

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0705

INFO RUCNCLS/ALL SOUTH AND CENTRAL ASIA COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

RUCNCIS/CIS COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

RUEKJCS/OSD WASHDC PRIORITY

RUMICEA/USCENTCOM INTEL CEN MACDILL AFB FL PRIORITY

RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC PRIORITY

RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC PRIORITY

RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC PRIORITY

RUEKJCS/Joint STAFF WASHDC PRIORITY

RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY

RUEHVEN/USMISSION USOSCE PRIORITY 2823

RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY 2208

RUEHNO/USMISSION USNATO BRUSSELS BE PRIORITY

RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS PRIORITY

RUEHLMC/MILLENNIUM CHALLENGE CORP PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BISHKEK 000173

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DEPT FOR SCA/CEN - GEHRENBECK

E.O. 12958: DECL: 02/19/2018

TAGS: PGOV PHUM PREL KDEM KG

SUBJECT: OPPOSITION: GRIM OUTLOOK FOR KYRGYZSTAN

REF: A. BISHKEK 113

B. BISHKEK 71

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Classified By: Ambassador Marie L. Yovanovitch for Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (C) Summary: Kyrgyz opposition figures continue to express a grim outlook for the country's immediate future. Former MP Azimbek Beknazarov sees revolution the only way forward. He claims to have support for his "revolutionary committee" and thinks there could be demonstrations in the spring. Others, such as former Security Council Chair Miroslav Niyazov, see grounds for discontent, but also see a divided opposition. Another opposition figure, Nurjumal Baibolova, believes that the government will manipulate any protests to give Bakiev a pretext for early presidential elections. At this point, despite the dire predictions, the likelihood of demonstrations is slim. End Summary.

Revving-up the "RevCom"

¶2. (C) In a meeting with the Ambassador February 14, ex-opposition MP Azimbek Beknazarov predicted there could be demonstrations in the spring, possibly by the third anniversary of the "tulip revolution" on March 24. He claimed that his "revolutionary committee" (Ref A) had the support of more than ten political parties, and, acting nonchalant about the possibility of bloodshed, Beknazarov added that "the only way forward for Kyrgyzstan is the revolutionary way." In the meantime, he said, his committee would cooperate with other groups, such as the "people's parliament" being organized by ex-FM Jekshenkulov's "For Justice" movement. (Comment: Beknazarov was short on details and credibility. End Comment.)

Splits in Opposition, Splits in Government

¶3. (C) Former Security Council Secretary Miroslav Niyazov told the Ambassador February 15 that endemic corruption, the

penetration of criminal elements in government, and the Bakiyev family's interference in political and economic matters, were causing disillusionment and laying the grounds for revolution. Niyazov thought that demonstrations in the spring were a possibility, and he worried that "clandestine, extremist groups" could emerge in reaction to the government's authoritarian tendencies. Niyazov noted that while the opposition was currently disunited, he thought that the opposition groups would eventually coalesce. He predicted that splits would emerge within the ruling Ak Jol party, with a serious impact on the parliament. He also said that the government itself was not united, lambasting his former colleagues for their inability to work productively.

Conspiracies Abound

¶4. (C) Nurjamal Baibolova, former Chair of the Bishkek City Council and wife of ex-opposition MP Kubatbek Baibolov, told Emboff recently that she believed the government would organize "fake protests" in order to precipitate a crisis. She further claimed that security service (GKNB) sources told her that the government would encourage religious extremist elements to participate in such protests. President Bakiyev would then "settle" the crisis by calling for early presidential elections. Grouping opposition groups with religious extremists, she said, would help reduce potential support to the opposition.

Comment

¶5. (C) Despite the dire claims made by those on the outs, at this point, the likelihood of renewed mass protests remains slim. Opposition figures articulate many grounds for

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discontent, but the opposition remains disunited, lacking organization and resources. While the conspiracy theories may be far-fetched, the government is not above using "fake" or pocket NGOs, as on February 13, when a number of groups publicly called for the arrest of opposition "revolutionaries" like Beknazarov.

YOVANOVITCH